



Sue Jones, Public Information Officer
(760) 955-1681 (Office)
(760) 953-6940 (Cell)
sjones@victorvilleca.gov

14343 Civic Drive
P.O. Box 5001
Victorville, California 92393-5001

News Release

CITY OF VICTORVILLE SELECTED FOR WHAT WORKS CITIES INITIATIVE *Becomes the Only City in Southern California Selected for Major Philanthropic Effort*

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VICTORVILLE, Calif. – Today, Victorville Mayor Gloria Garcia announced that Victorville has joined an elite group of just Twenty-Seven U.S. cities selected for Bloomberg Philanthropies’ “What Works Cities” initiative – one of the largest-ever philanthropic efforts to enhance the use of data and evidence in the public sector.

“We are thrilled to be the first city from Southern California to be selected into this prestigious program,” says Garcia. “Victorville will receive expertise from world-class consultants who will help us use data more effectively to improve service to our residents.”

What Works Cities consultants will help Victorville improve its open data practices. The goal is to make the City’s data more accessible to the public, engage residents around City priorities and services, and to increase transparency and accountability.

For example, a third-party, app developer could utilize GIS and permit data to map the locations of community yard sales. Similar concepts could be applied to map construction sites and road closures in a city.

“The concept of open data is not new, but the application of open data in City Government is extremely new,” says Victorville Mayor Pro Tem, Jim Cox. “Very few cities are making data accessible for residents to manipulate and use freely as they see fit.”

Victorville took its first foray into open data with its Financial Transparency Tool in October 2015. Located on the City’s website, this open data application gives the public access to Victorville’s financial data such as the City’s budget, expenditures, and revenue.

Now, as a What Works City, Victorville is furthering its commitment to open data with the creation of an open data policy that will be considered by the Victorville City Council in April. Victorville will establish an Open Data Governance Working Group as part of the policy. This group, comprised of employees and community representatives will create a comprehensive list of the City's data sets, advise the Council on which data sets are of greatest importance to the public, and help establish the portal residents will use to interact with the data.

What Works Cities collaborates with participating municipalities to review their current use of data and identify areas for improved government performance and efficacy.

Today, Bloomberg Philanthropies announced that five other cities joined the City of Victorville as the newest "What Works Cities." The other cities are Boston, Massachusetts; Charlotte, North Carolina; Little Rock, Arkansas; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Raleigh, North Carolina. With the addition of these new cities to the program, What Works Cities is now working in 27 cities in 18 states. The selected What Works Cities represent almost 11 million Americans with annual budgets exceeding a combined \$38 billion.

The consortium of leading organizations that has been assembled by Bloomberg Philanthropies to provide a program of support includes Results for America, the Center for Government Excellence at Johns Hopkins University, the Government Performance Lab at the Harvard Kennedy School, Sunlight Foundation, and The Behavioral Insights Team.

Launched in April 2015, the initiative will admit up to 100 cities on a rolling basis through 2017. To learn more about the What Works Cities initiative, visit whatworkscities.org.

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